



The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio Creates Peggy Zone Fisher Leadership Development Fund in Honor of Retiring CEO

CLEVELAND – September 5, 2024 – The Board of Directors of The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio (DCNEO) today announced the creation of the Peggy Zone Fisher Leadership Development Fund. The new fund has been created to honor the legacy of Peggy Zone Fisher, who served 18 years as the organization’s President & CEO before retiring, effective August 31, 2024.

The Peggy Zone Fisher Leadership Development Fund is intended to become a permanent source of funding to honor the legacy and impact of Zone Fisher, a devoted, long-time champion of diversity, equity and inclusion. The funds will be used to support important Diversity Center programs that cultivate leaders working to eliminate bias, bigotry and racism.

The fund has already begun receiving money – from friends, family and community donors in honor of Zone Fisher’s retirement and almost two decades of service.

“Since 2006, Peggy Zone Fisher has served with distinction as President & CEO of The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio,” said Tracie Longpre, DCNEO Board Chair. “Peggy’s knowledge, reputation and long-standing relationships in our community have positively impacted our organization and the students and professionals we serve. Today, we honor Peggy’s legacy and contributions to our communities through the Peggy Zone Fisher Leadership Development Fund.”

“Peggy Zone Fisher is a legend for her empathy and ability to build strong partnerships and bring diverse stakeholders together,” said Mark Swaim-Fox, who has assumed the President & CEO role upon Zone Fisher’s retirement. “The establishment of this fund ensures that Peggy’s dedication and considerable impact will be sustained long past her tenure.”

“My years at The Diversity Center have been the most fulfilling of my career and the honor of a lifetime,” said Zone Fisher. “I will be forever grateful to our talented staff, dedicated Board of Directors, generous supporters and steadfast community partners. To enable us to sustain this important work, fundraising has been a passion of mine, and I’m very proud to have this fund named in my honor.”

Contributions to the Peggy Zone Fisher Leadership Development Fund can be made at [this link](#):

<http://weblink.donorperfect.com/PeggyZoneFisherLeadershipDevelopmentFund>, or sent to the following address: The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio, 3659 Green Road, Suite 230, Cleveland, OH 44122.

During her tenure, Zone Fisher led the Diversity Center's fundraising efforts through The Diversity Center's two signature annual events, the Humanitarian Award Celebration Dinner and the Walk, Rock, Roll & Run, and other major gifts and grants – all of which combined to raise more than \$16 million for programs and services since 2006.

Under Zone Fisher's leadership, The Diversity Center:

- Became established as a new independent nonprofit organization based in Northeast Ohio, instead of being a local chapter of the National Conference of Community and Justice (NCCJ).
- Expanded its reach to 11 Northeast Ohio counties, serving over 7,000 students, educators and professionals each year.
- Established SHIFT Consulting, the professional services division of The Diversity Center, which focuses on providing diversity, equity and inclusion training to businesses, schools and nonprofit organizations.
- Expanded the acclaimed LeadDIVERSITY professional program nationally by licensing the program to nonprofit organizations in other cities.
- Remained active and impactful during the COVID-19 crisis, which was an exceedingly challenging time for community-based nonprofit and volunteer organizations.

Among Zone Fisher's many honors are Crain's Cleveland Business Notable Executive in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; the Richard W. Pogue Award for Excellence in Community Leadership and Engagement from the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Foundation; the YWCA Woman of Achievement Award; the Distinguished Leadership Award from the American Jewish Committee; and the Progressive Woman Award from Smart Business Magazine. She was a delegate to the first-ever White House Conference on AIDS and was honored by the AIDS Task Force of Greater Cleveland for her more than a decade of leadership on AIDS issues. She serves as Vice Chair of the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority Board of Directors.

The 2024 Humanitarian Award Celebration Dinner will be held November 20 at Hotel Cleveland (formerly the Renaissance Cleveland, which has been recently refurbished). Zone Fisher and Kevin Clayton, Executive Vice President, Chief Impact & Equity Officer for the Cleveland Cavaliers, will receive Humanitarian Awards this year.

About The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio

Founded in 1927 as the National Conference of Christians and Jews, The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio works to eliminate bias, bigotry and racism. The Diversity Center promotes understanding and respect on matters of race, age, religion, sex, ethnicity, culture, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status through its award-winning programs and services in 11 Northeast Ohio counties.

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